A REVIEW OF THE STATE OF THE BRITISH NATION.

Tuesday June 26. 1711.

HAVING mention'd in one of my *Reviews*, Mr. *Fleming*'s Melancholly Thoughts of the present Posture of our Affairs in these Parts of the World, which some ignorantly took, *as may appear in Time*, for a Satyr upon the Author; I cannot but enlarge a little upon something else which the same Author has advanc'd, which perhaps is not only new, but particularly Useful at this Time. In my last, I mention'd an Ingenious Exposition of Mr. *Fleming*'s, relating to the Story of *Korah*, *Dathan*, and *Abiram*; I think my self oblig'd to enter a little into the particular Case here, because, after so much Banter and Buffoonry, which the Dissenters in *England* have suffer'd from their modest Adversaries, about the Insurrection of *Korah*, &c. against God, and his Servant *Moses*, it would not be unjust to the Reverend and very Learned Author Mr. *Fleming*, only, but it would be unjust to the Interest and Cause of Religion in *Britain*, and particularly of the Dissenters in *England*, not to mention it upon this Occasion: That those Gentlemen, who think they have all the Game in their own Hands, against the Dissenters, may Examin a little into their Mistake, which if they will do Impartially, they will not find, that

because *Korah*, *Dathan*, and *Abiram* offer'd strange Fire, they therefore broke off from the Church of *Israel*, and Rebell'd against *Moses*, meerly on Account of a dislike to their Worship, and to set up a new one; or, as if because these Traytors to God Dissented upon a corrupt and false Foundation, therefore all that Dissent now from our Church, upon more justifiable Grounds, must come under the Character due to those Rebels, and deserve to be destroy'd by Fire from Heaven, as they were.

Now the Reverend Mr. *Fleming* having lately taken this Cause to pieces, in a Tract Entitled *The History of Hereditary Right*, he has given it such a Turn, that I must own, I think, has overturn'd all the Magazines of Raillery and Noise, which the Party had Treasur'd up against the Dissenters, (as they thought for many Ages to come) from this Story of *Korah* and his Accomplices; and it lies for ever against them, all the Cannon of this Battery is turn'd upon *High-Church*, and *alas for them! Korah*, *Dathan*, and *Abiram*, are prov'd to be *High-Flyers*, meer *Sacheverellites*, and Rebell'd against *Moses* and *Aaron* in defence of the Doctrine of Hereditary-Right, and upon no other Account.

Nothing is more evident, than that the Rebellion of *Korah*, &c. was no Dissenting from the Rites of Worship in the least, and *Moses* appointing them to take every Man a Censor in his Hand, made it plain, for by that it was to be try'd who had the Right of offering Incense; and it is evident in this, that KORAH did not object against the Sacrifice, but against who should offer it —— Not against the Priesthood, but against the Priest; the Question was not whether there should be a High-Priest or no, but who should be the Man? —— So *Dathan* did not Quarrel that the People should be divided into Tribes and Bands, and the Occasion of Naming Commanders, *&c. that is*, against the Oeconomy, or Government of *Israel*, but against the Governour —— *Ye take too much upon you*, say they —— You *Aaron* take too much upon you, to call your self High-Priest, who are the Son of a Younger Brother of the House of *Levi*; the Priesthood is KORAH's by *Hereditary-Right* and Just Descent: And you *Moses*, take too much upon you to be Captain and Leader of *Israel*, the Government is DATHAN's by Hereditary Right; so that here was no Schism upon a Religious Account at all, but a Pretence against the Usurpation of *Aaron* and *Moses*, the one to the Priesthood, the other to the Civil Government, against the Hereditary Right of the Pretenders to either, *Korah* and *Dathan*.

This is what I have quoted Mr. *Fleming*'s Book call'd the *History of Hereditary Right* for, and this that Author makes out so clearly, that I need only give it you from his own Words; they that desire to be farther confirm'd in it, may consult the Author, who clearly makes out KORAH's Claim and DATHAN's Claim, if Hereditary-Right be a Just Claim, to be most Just, the Consequence whereof is as clear, and by his said Account the Author has made it evident.

1. That God Almighty in his Institution of Government in the World, whether Kingly or Priestly, took very little Notice, if any at all, of the Right of Primogeniture or Hereditary Descent.
2. That when *Korah* and *Dathan*, with the rest of their Rebellious Acomplices, rais'd a Tumult on Pretences of a Claim by *Hereditary Succession*, God esteem'd them as Rebels against himself, and against the Constitution of *Israel*, which he had Erected, *and he dealt with them accordingly.*

The Method Mr. *Fleming* takes to prove this, is so plain and direct, tho' too long to insert here, that, I think, I need only refer my Reader to the Book, which I am told is to be had at the Publishers of this Paper ——But I'll give a Sketch of the Quarrel in short, the rest the Curious may find as above.

The Text which Mr. *Fleming* begins upon, is so apt to the Purpose, that I cannot omit it—It is taken from I *Chron.* Chap. 5. Verse 1, 2, 3.

Now

Now the Sons of Reuben the first-born of Israel, (for he was the first-born, but forasmuch as he defiled his Fathers Bed, his Birthright was given unto the Sons of Joseph the Son of Israel: And the Genealogy is not to be reckoned after the Birthright.

For Judah prevail'd above his Brethren, and of him came the chief Ruler, but the Birthright was Josephs.)

The Sons, I say, of Reuben the first-born of Israel were, Hanoch, and Pallu, Hezron and Carmi.

Mr *Fleming* at large, *for as I said, I can but touch upon it in a summary Way, proves,*

1. That *DATHAN* one of the Rebels, was in a Lineal Descent, the *Eldest* Son of the *Eldest* Branch of *Reuben* the *Eldest* Son of *Jacob*; and that, by Consequence, he was the natural born Prince and Sovereign of *Israel* by *Hereditary-Right*, and a Descent in a *Right Line*: Let them who think they can Confute him, Examin the Genealogy.

Korah's Claim to the Priesthood, he explains most demonstratively, thus.

2. *AARON* was Descended from *Kohath* the second Son of *Levi*, who was his Grandfather; there, by the Way, the Priesthood was given away from the Primogeniture, which was *Gershom's*——However, this, as it was by God's immediate Direction, they did not so much oppose——— But the great Quarrel was this, *Moses* in the Third Chapter of *Numbers*, had made *Elizaphan* the Son of *Uzziel*, the Youngest Son of *Kohath*, to be Prince of the *Kohathites*, without regard to the Hereditary-Right of *Izhar* and *Hebron*, who were the Elder Branches of that House, and this it was, *says our Reverend Author*, that *KORAH* took Occasion from, to conspire against *Moses* and *Aaron*; for *KORAH* was the Son of *Izhar*, the Elder Son of *Kohath*, and thought himself Injur'd to have his Cousin *Elizaphan*, who was the Son of his Father's Youngest Brother, made Prince over his Head. *See Hist. Hered. Right, Pag.* 5.

Thus the Spring of the Rebellion of *Korah* and *Dathan*, was Founded upon the Claim of Hereditary-Right; *DATHAN*, *Abirim*, and *On*, Claiming the Civil Headship over *Israel*, by Hereditary Succession, in opposition to *Moses*, as *KORAH* did the Priestly Power, in opposition to *Aaron* and *Elizaphan*; And where's the Scheme of Religion in all this?

This is made out so plain by the Learned Author I have quoted, that I could not but dwell upon it a little, to let those People that have brought these Men in, rebelling against *Moses* and *Aaron* on account of Ceremonies in Worship, only see how they have mistaken the Text, and how, by Consequence, their Charge upon the Dissenters in *England*, to be Conspirators in the same Nature with *KORAH*, is Ridiculous and Absurd——— I therefore humbly recommend this Book to the Reverend Mr. *Lesly*, Dr. *Sacheverell*, &c. who have Levelled the Story at the *Dissenters*, and entreat them to give a clear Answer to it, *if they can*, and see if they can come off of the Interpretation Mr. *Fleming* has put upon it; and I cannot but think Mr. *Fleming* has done the High-Flyers of this Generation a great deal of Justice, in shewing them from whence their Principle is descended, who it is they are imitating, and what it is they merited of Old, who pretended to place a Sanction upon the Doctrine of *Hereditary-Right*, which the Almighty, *who is the Author of all Right*, never plac'd there ——— And let them have a care they provoke not the same Justice, to shew them, how unchangeable Truth, and the Author of Truth is, in all Ages of the World.

I shall close this with Copying from the Reverend Author aforesaid, the Speech which he brings in *Korah* making to *Moses* and *Aaron*, at the Time when they appear'd with their Mob of Princes, *for so it was, and no other*, in a Rabble against the Government God had appointed; and when I have quoted this, I shall refer you to the

Book

Book itſelf, which if it had nothing but this in it, would recommend it to your peruſal; *the Paſſage is thus.*

Their charge is againſt *Moſes* rather than againſt *Aaron*, tho' they are both joined in the Pretence; they Challenge both, but eſpecially him, as an Uſurper, who had Invaded the Kingly Power, which belong'd by Hereditary Right to *Dathan*, as the Eldeſt Branch of the Houſe of *Reuben* firſt-born of the Houſe of *Jacob*, as above; the Charge is to be ſeen, *Numb.* 16. *Ver.* 12, 13, 14. and which is ſumm'd up by our Author, thus in the Name of the Conſpirators, *viz.*

" That whereas the whole Congregation " of *Iſrael* was Holy as well as they—They, " *Aaron* and *Moſes* had Ambitiouſly Exalted " themſelves above the Tribes and Princes, " and had ſhared between themſelves, the " two great Prerogatives of Birthright, " *viz.* The Prieſthood and the Princely " Power, and that ſo, as to Manage all " Things as they pleas'd, without conſulting the reſt of the Tribes; placing Offi- " cers, and making Princes and Heads of " Tribes, without regard to the Heredi- " tary Priviledges and Prerogatives of Pri- " mogeniture, which by the courſe of Nature itſelf, and of Divine Right were In- " defeizible and Inſeparable from the Birth- " right of Princes.

This being the Charge, *Moſes* ſent for *Dathan* and *Abiram* to come up to him, they refuſe, and ſend an Anſwer to this Purpoſe.

" *We will not come up*; giving this An- " ſwer. *It ſeems it is a ſmall Matter, that thou* " *haſt Tricks us out of our Lands and Poſſeſſi-* " *ons, in the Fruitful Land of* Goſhen, *with* " *a Wicked deſign to Kill all of us, in the* " *Wilderneſs, that ſtood in the Way of thy U-* " *ſurpations; unleſs thou be alſo ſubmitted* " *to, as a Sovereign Prince over us; who* " *are Born thy Superiors. Of this thy Pride* " *and Uſurpation, thy Command, forſooth,* " *ſent to us, to come up to your Majeſty, is* " *an evident Proof; but which we ſcorn to* " *Obey. Thou didſt indeed Promiſe to bring* " *us into a Land, flowing with Milk and Ho-* " *ney, and a finer Land than* Goſhen. *But* " *now every one ſees that thou art an Arrant* " *Cheat and Lyer, ſeeing we are now doom'd* " *all of us, to Die in the Wilderneſs, and never* " *to ſee that fine Promiſed* Canaan. *Where* " *are our rare Vineyards and Corn-fields, that* " *thou waſt to put us in Poſſeſſion of, without* " *any Trouble or Danger? Can'ſt thou put out* " *the Eyes of theſe Men now as formerly,* " *who have all of them fully ſeen thro' thy Im-* " *poſtures? No, no, we Scorn to come up to* " *thee, or own thee any more.*

Now, ſeeing this was the Caſe of *Korah* and *Dathan*, in Oppoſition to *Moſes* and *Aaron*: I beg the Reader to think, whether ever there was any Thing more parallel to the ſame, than that of our late *High-Church Jacobite Party*, in Oppoſition to the *Revolution-Settlement* and *Maxims*. Are not *Dodwell*, *Leſly*, *Hicks*, *Sacheverell*, &c. the very ſame, both in Principle and Practice, that the *Koraites* were of Old? Is not the *Oxford Decree* a Compendious Syſtem. (I mean, as to its Firſt Articles) of the Principles of *Korah* and *Dathan*? And are not our late High-Church Addreſſers Materially of the very ſame ſtrain, that thoſe of *Korah* and *Dathan* were? This is ſo evident in Point of *Hereditary and Indefeizable Right* and its Sifter Principles, that I defie all the Learning of the *Oxonians*, and the Sophiſtry of the *Jeſuites*, to ſhew any real difference, (for I ſuppoſe they will not pretend that there is any any Oppoſition) between our late Magnified Doctrines, and thoſe of *Korah*, and *Dathan*.

Thus far Mr. *Fleming*, with much more, too long for me to quote, and too ſtrong, I believe, for the *Hereditary-Right Men* to Anſwer; at leaſt Mr. *Fleming* Challenges them fairly to do it, and when they Attempt to do it, I ſhall ſay more.

Printed for and ſold by *John Baker* at the *Black-Boy* in *Pater-Noſter-Row*. 1711.